

The Devil in His Place

When Colson let it be know that he had found Christ it was the cause of great rejoicing. This was only batural, considering that Colson epitomized deviltry and was popularly regarded as Nixon's chief devil-in-residence.

It was also the occasion of great joy among those others who had only recently come in out of hell's fires.

More than just what Nixon had said, Colson was capable of anything.

Colson's announced finding of Christ was an enormous encouragement to those who had decided to spend their lives in His service. Their public utterances fell short of saying it in these words, but it was pretty much of an inspirational wave on which the faithful rose to the occasion, seeming to say "If Colson can do it, anybody can do it."

If there were not hordes singing hosannahs at the great event, there were impressive bearers of witness to this astounding display of the power and influence of the holy spirit. Indeed, the holy spirit had tackled the most skilled of the devil's servants.

There was only one Colson.

Best known of the joyous and a man whose credentials were beyond question is the popular Democratic Senator from Iowa, Harold Hughes. Hughes, who had in the past been considered one of his party's most promising and a potential presidential candidate bore witness to the fact of this incredible event and to the genuineness of Colson's conversion. Hughes said he could - and he did - specify the exact moment the holy spirit entered Colson's body and drove the devil out.

It was not a minute too soon, either.

Colson was about to go to jail. He had been fighting it for two years but time was running on him.

For these two years, Colson had been proclaiming not purity but innocence. They may seem to amount to the same thing but they are not. It is because he was impure that Colson found Christ. But being impure and being guilty of jailable crimes are not one and the same.

proclaimed,
Having found Christ, as he himself said so eloquently/and having insisted that he was innocent of all those devilish crimes attributed to him - and knowing that he was, -found Christ or no Christ, going to jail - Colson was tortured in his new/spirit. What to do.

Colson himself found the true way.

He found a crime to which he could, in honesty and good faith he said, plead guilty.

This was a new crime. One with which he had not been charged. One of which he said he was in fact guilty.

He offered to plead guilty to it to the special prosecutor's office. His ~~office~~ offer was accepted. It included his word, pledged in his new ~~right~~ faith, with all the weight and probity of Christ's support, that he would bear true witness, telling all he knew to whomever wanted his testimony.

The Senate Watergate committee was out because it was about to expire. He had succeeded avoiding public questioning by it before the TV cameras, as he had also avoided secret testimony on proper, Fifth Amendment grounds, that he could not be compelled to bear witness against himself. Once he found Christ, of course, he could bear witness against anyone. And once he made a deal with the special prosecutor, it was unlikely that any new charges would be laid against him. The deal, as it generally does, included the pledge that what he said would not be used, in word or as leads, to bring any new charges against him.

There remained among his anxious auditors the House impeachment committee, the grand juries. And, of course, the press. Suddenly Colson was all over the front pages and on all TV tubes. Smiling, quiet, patient and holy as hell.

Sure, there were those ~~who~~ in the media, entirely on TV, the printed press remaining faithful to "objectivity," who reported this newest and greatest working of the holy spirit in sinful Washington with snide smiles and other facial expressions of disbelief. This was not to say that the holy spirit was weak. It was to say that in tackling Colson the spirit had taken on the toughest of the devil's nuts. No mean undertaking, considering Colson's deviltry as popularly attributed to him.

First supported by Hughes and his informal prayer-meeting of the converted and then by the headlines he himself made, it came to be accepted that indeed Colson had dedicated

his life and his not inconsiderable talents to the holy spirit,

Nixon, of course, had always been among the faithful, as he always said and showed.

He was born into the Quaker faith, no mean political asset, given their devotion to the cause of peace on earth and Nixon's to war wherever the spirit of John Foster Dulles and the interest of those who benefited from war wanted it waged. Undeclared, of course. Somehow, the Quaker meetings were uncomfortable with Nixon. The one into which he had been born and to which he never went was tortured over expelling him, unhappy as it was with his works. It ~~for~~ finally decided against ejecting him in the hope that he would do as they saw it return to their belief and practise.

Nixon's true faith could not be doubted because he held Sunday morning prayer services in the White House. There came The Watergate time, when one might have supposed Nixon would have had the greatest need for taking comfort and finding sustenance in his own White House prayer meetings. But that seems to have been the time when he never attended them. They continued, however.

Who could doubt that Nixon held a true faith when his in-house prayer meetings were led by men like Billy Graham? How often I had heard the reverend Graham's recorded sermons (and solicitations for money) from a distant New Orleans radio station owned by the Jesuits, a station on which all faiths that could pay were welcome. WWL has a clear channel, which is no more than fair to God. I am an early riser. Graham's recording went off the air at 4 a.m. New Orleans time, followed by a Nashville singing group in praise of God (and also in need of funding) at just the time I would seek the early-morning network news before beginning a new day of work.

How touching the ~~ym~~ humble close of God's Graham, addressing the plain folk of the entire south and other parts of the wide land. I heard them so often I recall them well. "God Bless y'all. "eal Good!"

With such a man to attest his faith, who could doubt that Nixon was a man of true faith?

(For those to whom other witness was more persuasive, there was always John Wayne.)

Colson's conversion, which was not entirely without forecast, was a great event in all the nation's capital. It so overwhelmed those investigative reporters that they consulted neither their memories nor their files, which in newspapers are called "morgues." Except for those knowing TV smiles, which had nothing to do with fact and conveyed no fact to the people, I seem to be alone in being underwhelmed by this newest and greatest demonstration of the power of the holy spirit as Colson himself proclaimed it.

From my memory, sustained by my files, Colson's conversion was just in time's nick.

Not simply because he could no longer avoid durance vile.

It coincided perfectly with a new Nixon need.

Colson served it well.

It coincided also with a dramatic move and a "report" by Watergate committee vice-chairman Howard Baker. This also had not been entirely without forecast. And Nixon's own transcripts of Nixon's own tapes records Baker as one who despite his public agonizing on TV was in Nixon's pocket. If Baker wanted to be the Republican candidate in 1976 and if Baker wanted the support of the Nixon hardcore, there was no other place for him.

Baker, it should be remembered, is the formulator of what he called the basic question, what did Nixon know, when did he know it, and what if anything did he do about it?

It should also be remembered that this formation presumed that Nixon had no participation in any Watergate crimes, had no advance knowledge of them or those who executed them, and had to have come to whatever knowledge he had at some late date.

In time, particularly after Nixon published his transcripts of his tapes, with this generous assist from Baker, the earliest date was fairly well fixed at about March 21, 1973. This ^{means} mens that it came to be assumed that Nixon had no earlier knowledge, no participation at all, and if there was, in those intervening nine months and four days any obstructing of justice, he was not part of it.

The combination of Baker and his Senatorial power and his influence within the committee whose Democratic members yearned for unanimity to avoid the ^{protest} Nixon complaint of partisanship at just the time the Committee's final report was to issue (on July 13, 1974) and the spirit which had found Colson was powerful. Holy or not, in its timing, another

of those remarkable Watergate "coincidence," it was without question powerful and without question, separately and in combination, all for Nixon.

~~With consultation~~ Consulting public sources makes this even more remarkable because nobody seems to have questioned the might of the holy spirit enough to consult these sources.

Understanding the power of the spirit that moved Colson is enhanced by a little background ^{on} ~~about~~ him. For all that has been attributed to him, little has been pinned and stuck. He was closer to and more important to Nixon than is generally known because he rarely talked about it. He was close-mouthed about what he did, which is not surprising, considering some of the things he did do. And he had enemies high inside the White House, like the first power under Nixon, Haldeman, who hated him. So, Colson the cagey and skilled operator, had good reasons for keeping what he did secret.

W. (Chuck)

"We know very little about what ~~Mr.~~ Charles/Colson actually did in the White House," begins a Washington Post editorial of the same day the Times printed Lambert's statement that Colson was and had been his good friend and source .

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The Time article already quoted, dated the day before, the one confessing/its sister publication ~~ix~~ "helped defeat Maryland's Democratic Senator Joseph Tydings/" through the joint Colson-Lambert operation, opens with a sharp characterization:

"Of all the assorted characters in the sordid Watergate cast, Cahrles Colson was widely viewed in Washington as the williest, the slickest operator and thus the least likely to be charged with a crime"... (\$ sp below)

"if Colson actually performed half of the varius acts of which he has been accused, he was easily the least principled of all Nixon's associates."

But Time, too, confessed what the Post did:

"Colson's exact duties were always a mystery to most of the staff, but they were almost solely political. 'He worked for the President's re-election full time for four years,' says one staffer. Colson secretively turned papers face down and closed his desk drawers when colleagues entered his office, which some of them ~~a~~ sarcastically termed 'the Office of False Impressions.'"

Under the subhead "More Disliked," Time continued,

"Colson's troubles are not likely to sadden his former White House colleagues. He was probably more disliked, as well as feared, than any other White House aide. Even the awesome guardian of the Oval Office, H.R. Haldeman, was one of Colson's harshest critics. He once complained to a subordinate, 'Colson is always doing things behind my back.' Explains another ~~side~~ formed aide, 'Haldeman had no control over Colson. He detested him but he couldn't do anything about it. John Mitchell hated Colson, too. With those two against you, you have to have something powerful going for you to

survive that long in the White House."

Reasons for hating Colson for more than the jealousy Haldeman expressed existed. Two samples illustrate that Colson turned his special talents on Republicans, men who had served Nixon in high position, not just Democrats.

Robert Finch, a liberal among Nixonians, a long-time friend and holder of high position in the government, was the "victim of a 'poison pen' campaign to discourage California Republicans from backing" Finch in the 1974 race, Jack Anderson reported August 14, 1973.

Anderson had^{seen} copies of Colson's memos to conservative HEW Secretary Caspar Weinberger urging him to run. In them Colson went after Lieutenant Governor Ed Reinicke (indicted for perjury in the matter of the ITT promise of \$400,000 to the Nixon re-election) as "an idiot and a sure loser even though he was being run by Governor Ronald Reagan and Lyn Nofziger, after whom the Nixonian job was named.

To accomplish his purposes, whether or not they were his alone, Colson told Weinberger that Finch had suffered a nervous "breakdown or whatever it was." As his source Colson quoted Nixon's Surgeon General, Dr. Jesse Steinfeld, also attacked as "not too fond of Finch."

Steinfeld denied the whole thing. There had been an illness but with Finch's permission Steinfeld read the records and told Anderson, "There was no nervous breakdown, no mental instability."

When he was ill Finch had been Weinberger's predecessor as HEW secretary.

Four days after the Anderson column AP reported from Sacramento Colson's "formal retraction" and "an apology" from Colson "after threatening to sue him for libel."

"This is an admission he libeled and defamed me," Finch said. (F. Post 8/18/73)

If Colson had a mental instability, it still would not be easy to imagine that he would intrude himself entirely on his own into a campaign in any state, least on all populous California, with all its electoral votes.

According to Tom Braden's column the next May (Post 5/18/74) Colson pulled a similar stunt on Arthur Burns, Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board:

"Early in the Nixon administration Burns made a speech critical of some of the

President's economic decisions. Within a few days after he spoke out, a wire service carried a story saying that Burns was lobbying for a bill which would raise his own salary."

Ron Ziegler told Burns that Colson leaked the false story. (Post 5/18/74)

An attack on so high an official as Federal Reserve chairman without retribution - and without higher authorization?

According to investigative reporter Ron Kessler, Colson intervened "in a Justice Department investigation on behalf of...a close associate of a powerful New York Mafia leader" charged with "extortion activity." Kessler cited as his source "White House documents." (Post 12/2/73)

The President's "special counsel" helps Mafia extortionists entirely on his own and survives as "special counsel?"

Parlayed the odds against Colson's staying in the White House after this and the Finch and Burns character assassinations if he had been a self-starter are longer - impossibly long.

Still another case of another attack on another Republican is slightly different because it happened after Watergate committee member Lowell Weicher had criticized the White House staff. Weicher had accused Colson of "planting a phony story with reporters that Weicher had improperly handled campaign contributions," which was false. (Post 6/30/73)

Colson went to see Weicher "to protest his innocence/" and to suggest that Weicher "must be carrying a 'grudge' of some kind," accord to one present. Weicher said he bore no grudge but in turn asked if Colson actually had "written ...requesting an Internal Revenue Service audit of a" union ^{official} ~~organizer~~ who opposed Nixon. When Colson acknowledged that he had - and he knew Weicher had his memo @ Weicher threw him out of the office. (Post 6/30/73)

Colson was designer and master of the official Nixon "Enemies" lists John Dean exposed before the Watergate committee whose records contain facsimile reproduction of some of the memos and lists. (4H1682-1753)

in front of

SA / It is a crime to misuse the Internal
Revenue Service. The House Judiciary Committee's
first volume of evidence, released July 16, 1974,
is entirely devoted to proof of Nixon's misuse of IRS.
all — (pages of it.)

Any member of Nixon's staff would maintain an "enemies" list, fed by the rest of the staff, and would seek IRS retaliation against a union official -important as the labor vote is - without Nixon's knowledge or with his disapproval and not get tossed out of the White House, too? He fired his most human ^{cap.} cabinet officer, Wally Hickel, for Nixon didn't like. writing him a letter ~~taking the side of the younger generation~~

The labor official was a minor figure in these lists of Nixon's "enemies," which included some who had voted for him and a number not Democrats. But to take one addition to "CELEBRITIES," (4H1720) and bearing in ~~the~~ mind the audience they reach, can it be without Nixon's order or approval believed that/the enmity of "Carol Channing, actress; Bill Cosby, actor; Jane Fonda, actress; Steve McQueen, actor; Joe Namath, New York Giants; businessman, actor; Paul Newman, actor; Gregory Peck, actor; Tony Randall, actor; Barbra Streisand, actress," with "Dick Gregory" hand-lettered as an addition, would be incurred?

These and hundreds of others were not just names on "White House secret lists. ~~They~~ Often they got the full IRS treatment, as did the political militants Nixon and his crew detested. The laws are strict on fooling with taxes. Even after these enemies lists were publicized and victims complained and the press published the lists and the complaints, there was no plea from Nixon that it was all done behind his back and without his knowledge or approval.

Even without the active animosity of the powerful Haldeman and Mitchell Colson would not have hacked it in the Nixon White House had he done other than Nixon'd bidding. That he did what Nixon wanted the way Nixon wanted and as others could not is the only reason ^{long} Colson lasted until he left voluntarily, after The Watergate.

The thrust of all the testimony and evidence is that Haldeman ran the White House for Nixon and to a large degree ran the country, making decisions for Nixon. Two of his assistants were Gordon Strachan and Lawrence ~~Higgy~~ Higby. Strachan was a Watergate committee witness in July, 1973. Nixon's transcripts of his bugged conversations show Dean telling him that Strachan was "stonewalling" it so hard that he had by then twice committed perjury. So staunch a loyalist of both Nixon and Haldeman was Strachan that he was indicted in what became known as the obstructing of justice case alone with Colson,

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and the CREEP lawyer Kenneth
Haldeman, Ehrlichman, Mardian, Mitchell, Parkinson . (Indictment of March 1, 1974).

Strachan was a younger lawyer, from the Nixon-Mitchell Wall Street law firm.

During questioning by Senator Joseph Montoya (6H2474-5), Strachan, who knew, made it official that the White House had a dirty-tricks department, that this was the White House name for it, and that Colson, in running it, was the one man in the White House not under Haldeman's control:

Senator Montoya. Now you mentioned... that the White House did have a dirty tricks capability. What did you mean by that?

Mr. Strachan. Well, Mr. Colson's was referred to as the office of dirty tricks, so that is what I ~~xx~~-----

Senator Montoya. Well, withing that context did you discuss this capability and Mr. Colson? You must have had some background information.

Mr. Strachan. Well, periodically press reports would appear about things which you would jokingly or not so jokingly attribute to Mr. Colson. The only specific matter that I can recall at the moment regarding what would be sort of a dirty trick was concerning the 1970 election when I worked on the attack ads with Mr. Colson.

Senator Montoya. What do you mean by ^{the} attack ads?

Mr. Strachan.

Mr. Strachan. Well, 1970 there were a series of Senate races where -----

Here Chairman Ervin interrupted to rule "I don't believe we are entitled to investigate 1970." The respected Ervin did it is on several occasions, knowing full well that going into Colson's experience, duties and history was not to investigate earlier elections but to investigate Colson and the job he did in 1972. Another case had to do with the civil conviction of Nixon and Haldeman for falsely pretending their own committee was a "democratic committee in the 1962 California gubernatorial race. These attack ads include ~~the joint~~ those referred to earlier. The Colson-Lambert joint operation was part of the same dirty works.

When Montoya explained that he didn't ask the "question with respect to the 1970 races,"

and Ervin then shifted to, "I just raised that point in the interest of time is all, Montoya persisted, fortunately, saying he wanted to get the background as to this capability," which quite clearly was within the committee's powers and responsibilities. He then asked, "how long has this capability existed at the White House?"

Mr. Strachan. Well, I think it was there when I arrived in August of 1970.

Senator Montoya. And it was there during the 1972 campaign?

Mr. Strachan. Yes, sir.

Senator Montoya. Who was the head of it.

Mr. Strachan. Mr. Colson.

Senator Montoya. Was Mr. Haldeman acquainted with this capability?

Mr. Strachan. Well, that was the subject of some concern. Every once in a while Mr.

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Haldeman would ask me, "Well, what do you think about what Mr. Colson is doing?" and I would tell him, "I am sorry I really don't know very much about what Mr. Colson is doing." And he would turn to Mr. Higby and say, "Do you know anything about what Mr. Colson was doing?"

And it was sort of a joke, nobody really knew what Mr. Colson was doing."

At this point the transcript records "laughter." It was a joke. Not even Nixon's top man or his two top assistants had the slightest idea what Colson was up to. Only that it was "dirty tricks." They knew of the fact of it, no more, as Strachan then testified:

"...he [Haldeman] was certainly aware of Mr. Colson's various dirty tricks, not necessarily the specifics or the details, but that he was generally aware of them, and that he was aware of intelligence gathering since it had been discussed in several meetings."

Colson was the one top man in the White House not under Haldeman's control and Haldeman was Nixon's top man, his administrator, his guy in charge. This can mean only that whatever Colson did he did for Nixon and in consultation with Nixon outside the chain of command. It is quite the opposite of Colson being a "self-starter."

The evidence is that Colson, who closed his desk drawers and turned the papers on his desk face down when associates entered his office, also had direct and frequent-
(34 1051)
and private -- conferences with Nixon. On Colson's special operations there was nobody in between him and Nixon.

These Colson operations were not just ordinary dirty tricks. They included the kinds of ~~the~~ schemes that in the Nixon White House were "public relations," those done by a "PR firm."

Prior to the Watergate committee's hearings, John Hanrahan, who joined the Post's Watergate reporters and did first-rate work, exposed that Colson "was the author of a newspaper ad that purported to be a citizens' group effort in support of the President's decision to mine Haiphong Harbor last May." (Post 4/27/73)

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"Colson...also attempted to get the [re-election] committee to publish another as using a doctored photo designed to make it appear that ...McGovern was supported by long-haired 'freaks' and Vietcong sympathizers.

Philip ~~don~~ Joanou, former executive vice president ~~of the~~ for the November Group, which handled the committee's advertising, said yesterday...that Colson 'initiated the idea and wrote the copy' for the apparently illegal Haiphong ad..."Post 4/27/73)

Colson's orchestration was something! He missed nothing. It crops up throughout the Watergate hearings. He got Hunt to work through Barker to have the Cubans support the unpopular attack on Haiphong and the bombing of North Vietnam. Barker testified they started work on this before the speech Nixon made on it and through Hunt knew in advance of that speech. More "PR firm" work. CREEP staff members testified that they were driven up the wall buying papers in which there was a ballot in a poll on this attack on North Vietnam. All the CREEP staff was put to work sending in ballots in ways intended to make their loading of the poll to appear spontaneous. They even ran the approximately 5,000 newspapers through their shredders so they wouldn't get caught. Had it not been for this CREEP contribution to the Colson operation the poll would have been close to 100% against Nixon's acts. The station was managed by one of the signatories whose name Colson put on his series of ads of which that against Tydings is one. Colson even got the ultra of all right-wing commercializers of religion, Rev. Carl McIntyre to stage a rally in support of Nixon. Colson co-ordinated that job. It was called a "win-the-war" rally. (While it attracted less than a corporal's guard of McIntyre's faithful, it made nationwide TV and in the pictures the small crowd appeared large because only a small part, that around McIntyre, was shown. (Nation 5/14/73))

If Colson kept secret inside the White House what he did for Nixon, he flaunted his devotion.

On August 28, 1972, which was about mid-point between The Watergate second break-in and the election, he sent what became a famous memo to the entire White House staff.

(Post 8/30/72) It was leaked in a day. He concluded;

"Just so you understand me, let me point out that the statement in last week's UPI story that I was once reported to have said that 'I would walk over my grandmother if necessary' [to Nixon's re-election] is absolutely ~~true~~ accurate."

This is how Colson called on the entire Nixon staff "to recharge the batteries" for "a 24-hour day, a 7-day^a week job" not to serve the country but for Nixon's re-election.

A significant part of this memo escaped attention in the walk-on-my-grandmother attention. It establishes the kind of authority Colson had in Nixon's White House. He told the entire staff:

"No one should plan and trips anywhere without my express approval. No one should ever be out of reach of the telephone...No speaking engagements should be accepted, no trips should be planned, without my knowing and approving in advance."

This is the directive in which Colson told the publicly-paid staff that is supposed to serve the people to "Think to yourself at the beginning of each day, "What can I do to help the President's re-election today?"

It is not a directive he could have issued on his own. He could not have given orders like these to everyone in the White House without Nixon's approval. Or instructions.

The White House staff, on its part, assumed that the ~~Watergate~~ operationx of which the ~~gm~~ bungled break-in was part was Colson's.

John Dean testified to the CREEP fear, expressed by Magruder, that "they" were "afraid that Mr. Colson himself would take this operation over." (Watergate committee 6/29/73)
The same day, Counsel Dash quote from a Colson memo to Bruce Kehrli, a Special Assistant to the President, in which Colson said, "Howard [Hunt] has been very effective for us."

success in secrecy

Because of his ~~own-successful~~ secrecy and because Hunt was successfully bribed, there is no definitive answer to a question about Colson's responsibility for the various Hunt Jobs. It is the official story that Colson recommended Hunt, following which he was hired, both in early July, 1971. We have seen that Hunt was interviewed the previous December, not for the first time that July. There are clues, however, in what escaped suppression.

of the numerous

One of the potentially more important/areas of Colson's criminal activities for Nixon is in Hunt's jobs. Colson avoided any public testimony of any kind before any official body. Indubitable great as are his skills- and he was what amounts to Nixon's capo in a virtual Mafia family of practitioners of the black arts - he could not and did not accomplish it alone. Most responsibility for this - and the unimpeachment of Richard Nixon is helped make possible - lies with the Watergate committee, which never had Colson as a public witness because it delayed too long, until as it knew was inevitable, he had been told by the prosecutors that he was a target of grand-jury inquiry.

~~Examine this~~ This failure can be illustrated from personal experience. It was

no secret that the entire top echelon at the White House was guilty of a wide range of criminal acts. Each therefore had little to lose and everything to gain by lying. The committee had a chance between calling the big-shots at the outset or putting the smaller fry on first. The obvious disadvantage of making a case before taking the testimony of the bigger operators is that they knew what they would have to lie about and would have time to make up a defense. But if they were called first they would have to worry about perjury charges that could be established after their testimony was taken under oath. Here the documents that some of these lower in rank than Colson, Haldeman and Ehrlichman -- unknown to these three -- would have beat their heads in.

The case of John Mitchell is easiest understood. From my own Senate-investigation experience it was obvious that the only chance of getting any truth on material evidence from Mitchell would be after Ehrlichman, in his own and Nixon's defense, nailed Mitchell to the wall. Only if Mitchell saw instead of merely fearing the bars of the jail would he have the inspiration to defend himself rather than "stonewall" it.

A few days before Mitchell's announced testimony of July 10, 1973, I was discussing this with a former law professor who had held a Senate post equivalent to that of Sam Dash, chief counsel for the Watergate committee. He also knew Dash. While we were discussing this pretty obvious flaw in the committee's approach he picked up the phone and phoned Dash with the warning that without Ehrlichman's making the case he would certainly make against Mitchell before Mitchell testified Mitchell would stonewall it.

The rest is history. Mitchell did stonewall it and in his testimony that didn't begin until July 24, 12 days after Mitchell's ended, Ehrlichman did put Nixon's responsibility and that of all the others in the White House on Mitchell. Over and over and over again throughout the five days he was on the stand.

From what had been leaked alone this was a certainty. If the committee had not been competent, as it was, it had to know the result. In following the course it did it assured the result of that course.

One of the consequences is that the Colson operations and connections remained unexposed except for the few leaks relating to them. tr as new graf from 12 here

White House insiders assumed a working Colson-Hunt relationship. (tr from 12 as new graf)

Dean also testified that as soon as he heard of the break in ~~he assumed that~~
Colson was involved when he heard that Hunt was implicated.

"my immediate reaction was that Colson was probably involved." (3H932) This despite the fact that Dean was in on all the CREEP intelligence operations from before they were approved.

The next day
This was the day after the arrests, June 18./Colson ~~then~~ ~~protested~~ "vehemently protested that he knew nothing and had no involvement in the matter whatsoever." (3H932) Dean testified that "the records indicated that Hunt was still a White House consultant to Colson." (3H934)

Colson, remember, had gotten ^{the} a message from Hunt, that Hunt's safe held dynamite. Dean testified that "Colson, without getting specific, said it was imperative that someone get the contents of Hunt's safe." (3H934)

The shrewdie Colson did not then let Ehrlichman, Maldeman, Dean or the others know that he had the combination to Hunt's ~~safe~~ safe. Nobody else there did.

This quartet then called Kehrli and "quizzed" him on Hunt's status at the White House. Colson was arguing that Hunt should have been removed from the White House as of March 31," the date of the last check he had drawn. "Mr. Kehrli's records, however, did not so indicate." (3H935)

Colson then sent Dean a memo saying "I think it can be flatly ~~stated~~ and clearly said that his [Hunt's] services here terminated on March 31, 1972." (3H1157)

The one thing about this that "can be flatly and clearly said" is that Colson was a liar, knew he was a liar, lied deliberately to keep himself out of it because Hunt was then still working for him, and that all of this was another of Colson's contributions to Nixon's unimpeachment.

A few of Dean's other comments relate to this. "Hunt had a very close relationship with Mr. Colson" and "Hunt had a practise of reporting everything to Mr. Colson."

This underscore the plaintive note Colson addressed to Dean on receiving Hunt's letter. "What the hell do I do?" Colson asked.

Hunt's work crossed the board, but he worked for Colson and was paid through Colson.

(Post 4/11/73)

One of the reason for all the leaks ~~relates to a~~ leaked FBI report of its interview with Colson in his lawyers' offices. (One, Judah Best, was also Spiro Agnew's lawyer.) is a lack of confidence that the agencies of government would function as they should in this series of crimes and that without the leaking much would be suppressed. One of the more interest of the ignored documents is a

The FBI had all Hunt's pay and expenses records and all the expenses of all those who worked for and with him. They refer in this report to a Colson memorandum of September 13, 1971,

"requesting in accordance with an earlier arrangement the reimbursement of Hunt for the following expenses: Air Fares for two men from New York City to Washington, D.C., \$68.00; dinner check, Miami, \$35.85; Hotel bill for three men, Los Angeles, \$156.90. Colson advised as follows:"

It boils down to Colson claimed to know nothing.

It also is enough to involve Colson in not less than one charged crime in which he and Felipe De Diego were immunized was not charge, the bungled burglary of Ellsberg's doctor, the case in which Hunt ~~was immunized~~ ~~was immunized~~ and Ehrlichman, Liddy, Barker and Martinez were convicted.

(Post 7/13/74)

Except for the Miami dinner check, which could have been Hunt's when he made the arrangement, these expenses coincide with the expenses of the three Cubans when they did the job and Hunt and Liddy's return from New York. They had returned from this burglarly not directly, as we have seen, by way of New York and exactly coinciding with the break in at the NAACP legal defense and educational fund's office. The Cubans had made the same ~~detour~~ detour in returning to Miami at the same time. And Barker testified to his practise of making travel arrangements in Miami and being repaid.

In summary, Colson was into much more than will ever be know, much less than he was ecer charged with, worked directly with Nixon, not through Haldeman or Ehrlichman, and in protecting himself he also helped Nixon's unpeachment because he did all his work for Nixon. This work simply could not have been done unless Nixon wanted it done. And Colson would not have lasted four years if Nixon opposed or disapproved any of it.

This work and this relationship are background to what the San Francisco Chronicle headlined "Colson Has Seen the Light." (12/7/73) The stiry, from the Los Angeles Times

service, recounted that the day before Colson had been invited to one of Nixon's well-advertised White House "staff prayer breakfasts". Colson explain that this was because he had "become 'a very close ~~and~~ dear friend' of the principal breakfast speaker, Senator Harold E. Hughes (~~Dem. Iowa~~ (Dem-Iowa), who is retiring from the Senate to become a religious worker."

This is the first indication that the true spirit had siezed Colson: ~~Not the version that made more splash:~~ "Colson said he had 'come to know Christ' since he left the White House staff in March." If this is no testimonial to the high moral character of the White House staff, it is the first indication of the willingness of the holy spirit to undertake the seeming impossible.

Time (12/17/73) added that Colson had said "since his departure from the White House staff he has had 'some occasion' to think about religion' and 'pray with other committed people.' Suspecting that his newfound faith may go down hard with some, Tough Guy Colson had a forthright response for scoffers. Said he: 'If anyone ~~doubts~~ wants to be cynical about it, I'll pray for him.'"

This surely would have kept Colson busy!

Eric Severeid added a dry comment (CBS Evening TV News 12/17/73), if Colson does not yet claim to be able to walk on water, at least he has foresworn walking on grandmothers. The same day The Washington Post headlined it "Colson, 'Mr. Tough Guy,' Finds Christ." William Greider found this "as startling as any of the other startling revelations which have come out of Watergate."

Skeptics that these reporters and headline-writers may have bee, the Post gave the story page-one play with two full columns of carry-over, replete with lengthy quotes from Colson an the repentant new Colson and from Hughes, who reveled in this religious accomplishment of making a Christian of the Episcopalian Colson.

"Cynics can say anything ~~they want~~ about a man's religious experience," Hughes said. "They said it about me. They'll say it about him. That doesn't change the fact that it is real. It happens to men and women...the best...the worst...it alters their way of life. Chuck Colson is a new man in Jesus Christ."

"Hughes, at least, was converted. Twice.

Through all of this period between the time he left the White House and his conversion Colson was not proselytizing for Christ. But he was for Nixon. He was able to and he did command considerable attention. His line was that Nixon was ignorant and was imposed upon by those he trusted. (Except Colson.)

Three days before ^{Dean's} ~~Dean's~~ Watergate committee testimony began Colson pontificated (KEPA News, 6/22/73) "that the greatest tragedy of the Watergate scandal is that President Nixon was ill-served by his closest advisers." Presumably, Colson again excepted. "Information about the break-in was kept from him..." "Nobody asked how Colson could possibly know, such is the power of the holy spirit. He said that when he asked about the whereabouts of E. Howard Hunt two days after the Watergate break-in, Dean told him that Hunt had been ordered out of the country." This is the same day that Hunt saw Colson's secretary and left the message on which Colson acted, the same day Colson's assistant Douglas Hallett, saw Hunt in his office. No questions again.

There was a two-week gap between the end of Dean's testimony and that of Mitchell, the next witness. Colson filled it by appearing on "Face the Nation" on July 1. The Next day's New York Times page one, column head is faithful: "Colson Says Dean Misled President About Watergate." Colson did not and could not know this. He had to know he was not telling the truth. In the year that followed, Dean was more than amply confirmed, his confirmers including Nixon and his tapes transcripts.

Everyone admits that Dean told Nixon "there was a cancer on the Presidency" and that his own trusted ones were doing him in. Colson's version is that Nixon phoned him that evening "and said to me that he had to get to the bottom of the Watergate himself, he had to find the truth..." Dean, of course, was holding it all from him. But in the Colson/Nixon version only. That also is the evening of the day Nixon approved paying \$75,000 more in hush-money to Hunt, the very evening on which it was delivered.

Subsequent disclosures leave no doubt that rather than "find the truth" Nixon had been busily engaged in burying it deeper and passing on the details of the grand-jury testimony his closest would have to face. His admitted source was the man he placed in

overall charge, the same man who had always been in immediate charge as head of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, Henry Petersen. In the tapes Nixon's version of Petersen's independence and his description of the investigation over which Petersen was presiding is, "I have him on a short leash."

Colson had no answer to an obvious question on "Face the Nation." When Nixon had Ehrlichman conduct another "investigation," the one Ehrlichman later told the Watergate committee was no investigation at all, why did Nixon put Ehrlichman in charge after Ehrlichman was implicated in The Watergate crimes? Trust Ehrlichman to investigate Ehrlichman?

Conservative columnist-panelist Robert Novak told Colson, "Your answer to everything is to attack John Dean." Colson's ^{answer} ~~response~~ was a long speech, not a response.

One could go on and on with what was never put together for popular comprehension and is essential to understanding. As disclosure poured out on disclose, each swamped the other until comprehensibility was drowned. When the daily media works on a 24-hour concept of news, as it must or it also is submerged, this could be anticipated by the Nixon defense. Only in books, magazine articles and long editorial pieces can the evidence be put together. There was so much of it those media elements making the effort could not begin to keep up.

Colson, while he was finding his private Christ, was also the point^{man} of Nixon's out-of-the White House defense. As Novak noted, he was still in the attack business. The Christ he found was not strong enough to make Colson truthful. He was, however, a ~~excuse behind which~~ Colson could cover for Colson's lies, without which no defense of Nixon - or of Colson - is possible.

And nobody believes that a man who has dedicated his life to Christ would dream of lying.

The most blatant of the lies also worked. As late as Colson's long - and still not public-appearance before the impeachment hearings of the House Judiciary committee the Post headlined what he said as ^{incriminating of} ~~critical of~~ Nixon, "Colson Links Nixon to Untrue Report." It was not about an indictable offense. It dealt with the "enemies" investigation of CBS News correspondent Dan Schorr. And at that late date, July 16, 1974, the Post's

repeats the successful Colson lie so essential to Nixon's unimpeachment, "After leaving the White House Hunt helped supervise the Watergate break-in."

As

33 tough-minded a reporter as The New York Times' Seymour Hersh, the man who before joining the Times had dug up and exposed the story of the My Lai massacres, repeated Colson's propaganda as unquestioned fact. Where in the Post story of July 16 just of Colson quoted Richard L. Lyons and Bradley Graham told their readers/without suggesting it might not be so, "This year he had a religious conversion," Hersh did likewise in straight quoting of Colson saying of himself, "I had a tremendous sensitivity to personal ethics." (7/7/74) *And this after Colson had made a deal to receive less punishment for his admitted voluntary confession of - felonious lack of "personal ethics!"*

The John Mitchell test should be applied to Colson's "religious conversion."

Once when Mitchell was embarrassed by questions about some Nixonian rhetoric he asked they be judged not by their words but by their deeds.

Once the belief that he ~~had reformed, that~~ he had had a genuine religious conversion caught on, Colson began an entirely new defense of Nixon that was not reported as what it was. His copping a plea, which was self-serving, helped this out. It just happened, in another of the endless "coincidences," to coincide with a line taken by Nixon's secret man on The Watergate committee, Howard Baker, would-be Republican candidate in 1976. Both got a real boost from a since man who intended anything but that, Harold Hughes. It is a combination hard to conceive as part of Nixon'd continuing avoidance of impeachment. But it is the fact.

It is also one of the more successful exploitations of the press, its needs and instincts and above all its "objectivity."

This is the same project in which
Colson had tapped dairy interests
for \$5,000.

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